

ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a split data and meta data distributed system operable to provide computer file services. The system includes a plurality of servers that include meta data servers and data servers. A client multicasts a message, including a request (e.g., a data request
5 or a meta data request) to the plurality of servers in the system. The client considers the plurality of servers to be a single server instance. The servers may be divided into different subsets, and each subset is responsible for data requests or meta data requests. The servers that are responsible for the particular type of received request may respond to the request. Also, if multiple servers in a subset generate a request, the system may synchronize the responses, such
10 that a single response, rather than multiple responses are transmitted to the client. This synchronization may not be necessary for responses to requests that do not change the stored state of the system.